



EUGENE BLM

“ EYE TO THE FUTURE ”



Planning and Project Focus

FEBRUARY 2001

A Note from the District Manager

This edition of the Eugene “Eye to the Future” is part of our continuing effort to keep you informed of ongoing and proposed activities on the Eugene District.

We strive to keep you up to date about local BLM proposals, issues, activities and opportunities. More importantly, we seek ideas, comments, and participation from those who are, or may be, affected by our management decisions.

Our District’s employees continue active involvement on several key issues, including: Resource Management Plan (RMP) implementation; “Jobs in the Woods”-watershed restoration efforts; management and land acquisition at the West Eugene Wetlands; maintenance and improvements on roads, bridges and water systems; and participation on Advisory Committees and Councils. As you read this edition, you will find descriptions of many different types of projects related to these key issues.

Thank you for your interest in BLM’s management of Public Lands. If you have any questions on information in this edition, do not hesitate to call upon us for clarification or explanation. Your input helps us to design and implement better projects that enhance the health of the land and meet the needs of our nation.

You are also invited to visit our web page at (www.edo.or.blm.gov).

Steve Calish, acting District Manager

UNDERSTANDING THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the broadest environmental law in our nation. NEPA applies to all federal agencies and most of the activities they manage, regulate, or fund that may affect the quality of the human environment. Whenever a management action is proposed on the BLM administered lands in the Eugene District, we are required to conduct an interdisciplinary review of the environmental effects of the proposal. We are required to provide the public with an opportunity to be involved in the planning and decision making process. The review of the environmental effects of a proposed action can occur in any of four ways: categorical exclusions, administrative determinations, environmental assessments, or environmental impact statements. Each of these is discussed in greater detail below.

Categorical Exclusions

It has been determined that some types of proposed activities do not individually or cumulatively have significant environmental effects and may be exempt from requirements to prepare an environmental analysis. These actions are called categorical exclusions (CE) and are covered specifically by Department of Interior and BLM Guidelines. Activities covered by a CE are not listed in the *Eye to the Future*.

Administrative Determinations

An administrative determination is a determination by BLM, that NEPA documentation previously prepared by the BLM fully covers a proposed action and no additional analysis is needed.

The process will commence with documentation that the new project's effected environment is comparable to the environmental components previously analyzed (no new information is relevant, no threatened or endangered species, historical or cultural artifacts, hazardous materials, or noxious weed concerns exist on the new site). The administrative determination will formally document the "sameness" of the new proposed action and the appropriateness of the previous analysis.

Environmental Assessments

Environmental Assessments (EA) are prepared to assess the effects of actions that are not exempt from NEPA, are not categorically excluded, and are not covered by an existing environmental document. An EA is prepared to determine if a proposed action or alternative will significantly affect the quality of the human environment (significance is defined in 40 CFR 1508.27). If the impacts are determined to be insignificant, a Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) is prepared which briefly states the reasons the proposed action and/or alternatives will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Once the FONSI has been prepared, the resource manager considers the environmental, social, and economic impacts that would result if the proposed action or alternative were implemented, and makes a decision as to whether to allow the action to take place or not. If the impacts are determined to be significant, the project could be dropped, or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) could be prepared.

Environmental Impact Statements

Major proposals that will significantly affect the environment require that an EIS be prepared. An EIS will include the environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives, identification of adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed action or alternative is implemented, description of the relationship between short-term uses and long-term productivity of the environment, and identification of any irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources.

How You Can Be Involved

Resource management in the BLM and other government agencies is process oriented. To influence a final decision on a project or activity, you must be a part of the process, and the sooner the better. You can provide your views and concerns as the proposed action and alternatives are being developed. You can provide your views and concerns as the proposed action and alternatives are being developed. You can also comment on the FONSI for EA's or the Record of Decision for an EIS during the formal comment periods.

To receive a copy of an EA or EIS or to get involved in the NEPA process. Fill in the information requested on the inside-cover of the first page and return it to us or call the listed contact person for the project or come by the office at:

BLM-Eugene District Office
2890 Chad Drive
Eugene, Oregon 97440-2226
541-683-6600
Toll Free Number: 888-442-3061
7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING EFFORTS

<1>Payments to Counties Legislation

On October 30, 1999, President Clinton signed into law the "Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000" (PL 106-393). The legislation, commonly called the "Payments to Counties Legislation" can be viewed in total at <http://thomas.loc.gov/> . The purposes of this legislation are to:

1. stabilize payments to counties which rely on timber receipts to provide funding to schools and roads,
2. make investments in, and create employment opportunities through, projects that improve the maintenance of existing infrastructure; implement stewardship objectives to enhance forest ecosystems; and restore and improve land health and water quality; and,
3. improve cooperative relationships among the people that use and care for federal lands and the agencies that manage these lands.

The legislation establishes Resource Advisory Councils (RAC's) to help the counties and the BLM identify restoration work. The boundaries and configurations of the RAC's throughout Oregon have been set. The Eugene District RAC boundary will include all BLM lands within Lane County and small portions in Linn and Douglas Counties within the Eugene District. Membership on the Eugene District RAC is being coordinated with the Lane County Commissioners. Projects will begin to be implemented starting in Fiscal Year 2002 (October 1, 2001). For more information you may contact Wayne Elliott at the Eugene District Office at 683-6600.

<2> Survey and Manage Record of Decision.

The Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture signed the Record of Decision (ROD) on Jan. 12, 2001 which finalizes changes to the "Survey and Manage" standards, guidelines, and mitigation measures in the Northwest Forest Plan. These mitigation measures, in conjunction with other elements of the NW Forest Plan, provide direction for managing the approximately 400 rare species which are thought to be closely associated with late-successional forests. The ROD implements alternative 1 of the Final SEIS, with modifications, and will provide approximately the same level of protection intended in the NWFP, but will also eliminate inconsistent or redundant direction, and establish a process for adding or removing species when new information becomes available. Survey and manage requirements apply to all forest-management activities, such as timber harvesting, prescribed burning, trail construction, road construction, or other activities that could disturb habitats of the species covered within the ROD.

Copies of the ROD and Final SEIS can be obtained by writing the Regional Ecosystem Office at PO Box 3623, Portland, Oregon 97208, or they can be accessed at <http://www.or.blm.gov/nwfpnepa>.

MCKENZIE RESOURCE AREA

Lost Creek Watershed

<1>Get Lost Timber Sale

Contact: Jack Zwiesler Phone #: 683-6497

Location: T.20S., R.01W., Sections 17 and 21

The proposed EA for the Get Lost Timber Sale would contain areas originally evaluated in the Lost Creek FY 99 Analysis Area EA. The proposal would include commercially thinning approximately 350 acres of upland conifers and a density management treatment of approximately 25 acres of riparian reserve. Harvest systems to be evaluated would be ground based, cable and helicopter. Timber harvest volume is expected to be approximately 3 million board feet.

Status: *Work on this EA is to begin in February.*

Mohawk Watershed

<2>Mohawk-Area Trails

Contact: Liz Aleman Phone #: 683-7578

Location: Showalter, Cash, Crooked, Shotgun, Seeley, and Drury Creek drainages

This project follows last year's decision to manage a 27-mile loop system of roads and trails for off-highway vehicle use. It involves a review of existing trails within the planning area that are not part of the 27-mile loop to determine which will remain open and managed for trail recreation, and others to be closed and rehabilitated. In addition, new trail construction opportunities will be explored, especially for reasons of promoting visitor safety and providing more beginner-level trail opportunities. Consideration of facility needs associated with trail recreation will be a third component of this project.

Status: *Project scoping. Please contact the project lead if you have an interest in this project*

<3>Crooked Creek Timber Sale

Contact: Jack Zwiesler Phone #: 683-6497

Location: T.15S., R.02W., Sections 22 and 23

The BLM is proposing to commercially thin 93 acres of upland conifers and perform density management treatment on approximately 52 acres of riparian reserve. Approximately 0.6 miles of road would be constructed. Approximately half of the new road construction would be decommissioned along with approximately 0.7 miles of existing road. Timber harvest volume removed would be approximately 1.1 million board feet.

Status: *The proposed EA is expected to go out for public review in February.*

Little Fall & Hills Creek Watersheds

<4> Hills Creek Transportation Management EA

Contact: Don Wilbur Phone #: 687-6994

Location: East of Jasper

The McKenzie Resource Area proposes to implement various road decommissioning and maintenance projects in the Hills Creek / Little Fall Creek Watersheds. The Hills Creek / Little Fall Creek watersheds are located approximately 5 miles southeast of Springfield, Oregon. This area is approximately 52,000 acres in size, of which approximately ten percent (10%) of the acres are managed by the BLM. A Watershed Analysis has been prepared to help implement the Northwest Forest Plan. The transportation management recommendations will be the basis for the Proposed Action. Road maintenance levels and road closures discussed in this transportation management

recommendation would be implemented over a 5 year period of time. Approximately 20 miles of road would be maintained and in some cases upgraded or repaired for future long term use. About 12 miles of existing roads would be decommissioned, and approximately 10 miles of existing roads not needed in the future would be fully decommissioned and removed from the road inventory.

Status: The EA is out for public review the comment period ends February 16, 2001.

McKenzie Watershed

<5> Landscape Design

Contact: Trish Wilson Phone #: 683-6448

Location: On BLM lands, 3 miles east of Leaburg to just past Silver Creek boat ramp on both sides of the McKenzie River

The project involves BLM administered lands within the Central Cascade Adaptive Management Area (CCAMA) which includes the Bear-Marten and Vida watersheds. The project area contains 16,595 acres of BLM administered land of which 8,282 is within key watersheds. The Landscape Design is an extension of the watershed analysis. It will be used for future planning on BLM lands in the CCAMA.

Status: This document will be completed by February. A peer review by researchers and BLM and USFS personnel will occur this Winter and early Spring.

<6>Cedar Flats Timber Sales

Contact: Jill Williams Phone #: 683-6164

Location: T. 18 S., R. 1 W., Sections. 5 and 9, T. 17 S., R. 1 W., Sec. 31 and T. 18 S., R. 2 W., Sec. 1.

The Cedar Flats Timber Sale proposes to Thin approximately 399 acres of upland conifers, age 45-

60, and a density management treatment of approximately 22 acres of riparian reserve. The proposed action identifies 1.15 miles of new road construction (primarily building a ridge-top road to replace a mid-slope road), 0.97 miles of road improvement, and 2.95 miles of road decommissioning (includes road mileage to be decommissioned due to new ridge-top road). Several mid-slope roads will be relocated to the ridge top to decrease riparian interactions and to set up a more permanent, long-term road system for future thinning in this area. Harvest systems evaluated would be ground based and cable. Timber harvest volume is expected to be approximately 3 million board feet.

Status: Work on this EA is currently in progress

Calapooya Watershed

<7>Calapooya Timber Sale

Contact: Jack Zwiesler Phone #: 683-6497

Location: T.14S., R.02W., Sections 28 and 35; T.14S., R.01W., Sections 31 and 33; T.15S., R.01W., Sections 1, 5 and 9; and T.14S., R.01E., Section 35.

The Calapooya Timber Sale would be a commercial thinning of approximately 500 acres. Permanent and temporary roads would be constructed. The temporary roads and some existing roads would be blocked and decommissioned. Riparian vegetation management will also be considered. Timber harvest volume is expected to be approximately 4 million board feet.

Status: Work on the Calapooya Timber Sale EA will begin in late Spring of 2001 and the EA is expected to go to the public in the summer.

COAST RANGE RESOURCE AREA

Upper Siuslaw River

<1>Whittaker Creek Aquatic Habitat Improvement Project

Contact: Leo Poole Phone #: 683-6289

Location: Whittaker Creek - T18S R8W Sections 28, 31, 32

The proposed action is to remove five existing culverts and replace one with new, three with two low water crossings or culverts (not decided to date) and leave one as a removal only (end of road 18-8-21) in four separate locations within the Whittaker Creek drainage for FY2001.

Status: Site specific NEPA for this project is mostly complete. This project is covered under analysis documents OR090 - EA-96-11 and OR090 - EA-00-13. If we change the plan to low water crossings instead of culverts a new addendum addressing the change and essential fish habitat would be available for public review in March.

<2>Middle Siuslaw - Oxbow Creek Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration Plan

Contact: Leo Poole Phone #: 683-6289

Location: Oxbow Creek T20S R7W Sections 3,4,9

The purpose of this restoration plan is to improve the quality and quantity of appropriate habitat in the Oxbow Creek drainage to benefit all fish species, other aquatic organisms, riparian plant communities, and wildlife species found here. Instream placements of wood and rock may be started in August or September 2001, after removal/installation of culverts projects in all three sections (culverts project begins in July). The decommissioning of Road 20-7-4 will run concurrently with the

installation of the new culverts in section 4 (Road 19-7-25.1)

Status: The NEPA document is almost complete in draft form. Waiting for specialist's inputs and review. The Environmental Assessment (EA) is expected to be available for public review in March.

<3>Bierce Creek Aquatic Habitat Project

Contact: Leo Poole Phone #: 683-6289

Location: Bierce Creek - T19S R7W Sec. 29

For FY2001, channel structures will be placed in the channel to raise the channel elevation and increase the complexity of habitat in said channel. The project is expected to commence in July-August 2001.

Status: The Environmental Assessment (EA) is expected to be available for public review in February.

<4>North/Pugh Creeks Aquatic Habitat Restoration Plan

Contact: Leo Poole Phone #: 683-6289

Location: North and Pugh Creeks - T19S R8W Sections 13 and 11 respectively

For FY2001, channel structures will be placed in the channel to raise the channel elevation and increase the complexity of habitat in said channel. The project is expected to commence in July-August 2001.

Status: The Environmental Assessment (EA) is expected to be available for public review in February.

<5>Schoolhouse Trail**Contact:** Dennis Smith Phone #: 683-6296**Location:** T16S R9W Sections 25 and 36
T16S R8W Section 31

A two phase project, the first trail segment would traverse approximately 2/3 mile of mostly existing trail to a viewpoint and picnic area. Trail would be improved and a small footbridge installed. The second segment would lead hikers southwest along a ridge to another viewpoint/rest before the descent down to the Deadwood Creek road a short distance from the trailhead.

Status: Scoping comments are welcome regarding alternatives, issues, or concerns.

Long Tom Watershed**<6>Long Tom road decommissioning****Contact:** Gary Cairns/Eric Meyers

Phone #: 683-6499 or 683-6771

Location: Coast Range RA

Close roads with earth barricades. Weatherproof closed roads by installing waterbars and removing stream culverts. This multi-year project should begin around August/September.

Status: Scoping comments are welcome on issues, concerns, or alternatives for use in the environmental assessment.

<7>West Eugene Wetlands Recreation, Access and Environmental Education Plan**Contact:** Joe Williams Phone #: 683-6121**Location:** West Eugene Wetlands, Coast Range RA

Over the past year a team representing the City of Eugene, Lane Council of Governments, and The Bureau of Land Management have been writing a plan to provide for public use of the public lands in the West Eugene Wetlands. As a result of public meetings and responses to mailings last summer, major issues were identified to focus the planning effort. The major issues were: what, where and how should recreation opportunities, public access and educational opportunities be provided on the 1,200 acres of publicly owned lands in the wetlands area, while protecting the wetlands natural functions and ecosystems. In late December a draft plan was completed, and this plan is being reviewed by an interdisciplinary team to assess the environmental impacts of implementing the proposed plan.

Status: Public meetings were held for scoping and issues identified. Comments are welcome on the draft plan and EA which will be available for public review and comment soon.

Alsea and Long Tom Watersheds**<8>Little Al Commercial Thinning****Contact:** Phillip Redlinger Phone #: 683-6977**Location:** T.15S, R.6W, Sections 7, 8, 17 and 18

The project proposal is a commercial thinning in the Matrix Land Use Allocation and would include thinning within the Riparian Reserve to accelerate tree growth. The proposed thinning would encompass approximately 155 acres (Unit # 1 would be approximately 80 acres, Unit #2 would be approximately 30 acres and Unit #3 approximately 45 acres).

Status : Surveys for survey and manage species are near completion. The Environmental Assessment (EA) is expected to be available for public review in June 2001.

Lake Creek Watershed

<8>Sammy Hill Density Management

Contact: Phillip Redlinger Phone #: 683-6977

Location: T.16S, R.8W, Sections 1

The project proposal is primarily an intermediate thinning on approximately 206 acres within the Late-successional Reserve (LSR) to accelerate the development of late-successional forest characteristics. The project is designed to promote tree growth, large crown development, and to increase diversity of stocking levels and size classes within the stand or landscape.

Status : Surveys for survey and manage species are near completion. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is expected to be available for public review in July 2001.

SOUTH VALLEY RESOURCE AREA

Siuslaw River Watershed

<1>Right-of-Way Agreement R-1022 Amendment 5

Contact: Don Meckley Phone #: 683-6972

Location: T.20S., R5W., Section 31

The Proposed Action involves a proposal by Weyerhaeuser Company (WeyCo) to amend an existing reciprocal right-of-way agreement. The amendment would include the use of existing roads

by WeyCo and rights to construct two short roads in Section 31 in order to access their land in T.20S, R6W., section 36. WeyCo currently has legal access to their land in section 36 using existing roads; however, those roads would require substantial maintenance and they have several stream crossings. By amending the R-1022 agreement, WeyCo could get better access to their land, and be able to decommission roads with several stream crossings.

Status: An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared and is available for public review. The public comment period ends on February 23, 2001.

<2>Fawn Creek LSR Restoration Project

Contact: Richard Hardt Phone #: 683-6690

Location: T20S, R5W, Sec 17

The proposed project area is located in the Coast Range Late-Successional Reserve (LSR0267). The area being proposed for treatment is a densely stocked Douglas-fir stand in which treatments would be designed to accelerate development of late-successional characteristics.

Status: The environmental assessment is in preparation, pending results of surveys for Survey and Manage species.

<3>Douglas Creek Timber Sale

Contact: Alan Corbin Phone #: 683-6792

Location: T20S, R5W, Sec 3

This proposal includes a density management thinning and fisheries habitat improvements on a 140-acre parcel along Douglas Creek, a tributary to the Siuslaw River. The project area lies approximately 3 miles NW of Lorane.

Status: An environmental assessment was prepared and released for public review in

March 1998. A final decision regarding this action is anticipated to be made in February-March 2001, pending consultation with the US National Marine Fisheries Service.

<4>Tucker Creek Timber Sale

Contact: Janet Zentner Phone #: 683-6795)

Location: T20S,R4W, Sec 27

This project would consist of a density management thinning on approximately 105 acres in the Siuslaw River watershed.

Status: Scoping is underway. A final decision is not anticipated until late fall of 2001.

Big River Watershed

<5>Jasper Creek Timber Sale

Contact: Peter O'Toole Phone #: 683-6786

Location: T22S, R3W, Sec 35

The proposed action is to complete a density management thinning on approximately 150 acres located about 4 miles southeast of London Springs in the Big River watershed.

Status: An environmental assessment was prepared and released for public review in July, 1999. A final decision regarding this action is pending the results of surveys for Survey and Manage species, but is anticipated to occur in March-April 2001.

<6>Twin Prairie Timber Sale

Contact: Janet Zentner Phone #: 683-6795

Location: T22S, R3W, Sec 3

The proposal is to complete a density management thinning on roughly 150 acres. The project area is in the Big River watershed, about one mile east of Cottage Grove Lake.

Status: An environmental assessment is being prepared and is anticipated to be available for public review in late spring, 2001. A final decision is anticipated in early summer, 2001.

<7>Laurel Curves Timber Sale

Contact: Peter O'Toole Phone #: 683-6786

Location: T22S, R3W, Sec 23

This proposal is examining a density management thinning on 180 acres of the Matrix Land Use Allocation in the Big River watershed, about 3 miles east of London Springs.

Status: Scoping is underway. A final decision is not anticipated until winter, 2001-2002.

